

U.S.S.N. 10/792,147

Remarks

Thorough examination by the Examiner is noted and appreciated.

The claims have been amended to further clarify Applicants invention. No new matter has been added.

For example, support for amendments is found in the Specification, the Figures, and in the originally presented claims.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC 102

1. Claims 1-10, 12-15 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Nin (US 6,828,071).

Nin discloses a method for aligning a wafer and masks.

In the method of Nin, the wafer (200) includes global alignment marks (302, 304, Figure 3) and a first mask (340) includes global alignment marks (342, 344) and field alignment marks (348) at the corner of each field (346) within field scribe lines (col 2,

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lines 53-59). On exposing the first mask, the respective global alignment marks are aligned and the field alignment marks are transferred to form secondary alignment marks (349) at the field corners on the wafers. In aligning a second mask (440 Figure 4) which also includes field alignment marks (446, 448), the field alignment marks on the mask are aligned with the previously formed secondary alignment marks (349) on the wafer (col 2, lines 38-52; col 3, lines 17-23).

Applicants agree that, as the Examiner has indicated, the prior art does not show or suggest Applicants claim 11 (amended claim 6) as follows:

"providing a semiconductor wafer;

defining a plurality of fields on the semiconductor wafer, including a plurality of alignment fields;

providing a plurality of intra-field overlay alignment mark pairs around each of the plurality of alignment fields to provide for non-passive intra-field alignment correction; and,

providing a plurality of extra scribe-lane mark pairs around

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each of the plurality of alignment fields."

Applicants also submit that the prior art also does not show or suggest Applicants amended claims 1 and 12.

Conclusion

Applicants gratefully acknowledge indication of allowable subject matter. Applicants have amended their claims to achieve indicated allowable subject matter.

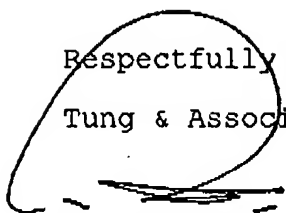
Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the Claims are now in condition for allowance. Such favorable action by the Examiner at an early date is respectfully solicited.

In the event that the present invention as claimed is not in condition for allowance for any reason, the Examiner is respectfully invited to call the Applicants' representative at his Bloomfield Hills, Michigan office at (248) 540-4040 such that necessary action may be taken to place the application in a condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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